

Bangalore Mirror

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BBMP audit reveals massive scam: Revenue officials, in collusion with property owners, said to have misappropriated ₹122.98 crore that should have been collected as property tax

SKELETONS TUMBLE OUT OF PROPERTY TAX CUPBOARD

Unauthorised layouts illegally registered; tax miscalculated, wrong land use and much more

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TWEETS @sridharVMIRROR

A major property tax scam has been exposed in the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) revenue department, revealing large-scale irregularities amounting to Rs 122.98 crore during the financial year 2022-23. An internal audit report by the BBMP has uncovered multiple instances of tax evasion facilitated by corrupt officials in collusion with property owners, causing massive losses to the civic body.

Key findings of the audit report

The audit report highlights several irregularities in property tax assessments, including the misclassification of non-residential properties under residential categories to levy lower taxes. In



“Action will be taken against those found guilty of misappropriating public funds. Citizens should report any irregularities to the authorities

— BBMP official

many cases, property tax was calculated on smaller areas due to incorrect zonal classifications, leading to significant revenue

losses. Additionally, some educational institution properties were improperly taxed as residential properties without proper verifica-

tion. The report also uncovered instances of unauthorised layouts being illegally registered

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

ALL IS LOST

Elderly woman becomes latest victim of digital arrest, loses Rs 1.3 crore over ordeal that lasted 6 months



PAGE 3

NEED AN INFLUENCER

Traffic police hope to rope in vloggers to use their platforms to spread the message on road safety



PAGE 5

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Volunteers clean up after litterbugs

Large quantities of single-use plastic, garbage removed from playground, ploggers urge responsible behaviour from citizens

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More than 40 volunteers joined hands on Sunday morning at Shalini Grounds, near Jayanagar, to remove plastic and garbage. Shalini Grounds, one of the famous playgrounds in Jayanagar, had a garbage pileup due to irresponsible littering.

The volunteers, including The Indian Ploggers Army, Bengaluru Hudugaru, and Youth For Seva, cleared 15 bags of garbage consisting empty liquor bottles,



Shalini Grounds in Jayanagar; inset: Volunteers collect 15 bags of waste

disposable plates and cups, and cigarette butts, in 45 minutes. The volunteers opined that the public should use the playground to play sports, but they must not be a spoilsport by generating garbage on the playground. They noted that currently the playground is being used to organise events apart from sports.

Highlighting that most of the litter was disposable cups and plates, G Nagaraj of The Indian Ploggers Army said, "Simple things like carrying our own bottle, plates, and tumbler can

go a long way in reducing the garbage."

Ridhi Jaya Prakash, a BCom student of Transcend College, expressed concern over the garbage at Shalini Playground. She said that volunteers, during Sunday's plog, came across a wide variety of waste, ranging from tea cups and whisky bottles to clothes and footwear. She stated that the trash could be tackled with small actions like avoiding

single-use items and reusing containers. "Having personally seen a significant reduction in waste at my own home by following these simple steps, I truly believe that these habits pave the way towards our larger goal of plogging and creating a cleaner environment," she said.

Vinod Kartavya of Bengaluru Hudugaru stated that it was unfortunate to see the large number of alcohol bottles and gutka packets in a playground where hundreds of youth come every day. He said that everyone who uses the playground holds the responsibility to ensure the cleanliness of it. "Of course there is no local people representative as of now in BBMP for 5 years. I request the government and the Supreme Court, as well as the election commission, to hold elections to BBMP immediately," he said. He appealed to the public to keep the city clean and green, and urged that the city be brought back to its glory as the Garden City rather than being known as the Garbage City.

THINGS TO DO

01 Immersive experience

Raja Ravi Varma Heritage Foundation presents an innovative, multisensory experience that brings to life the artistic journey and personal reflections of Raja Ravi Varma. The initiative blends art and technology, offering audiences an immersive exploration of one of India's most celebrated painters. **Where:** Gallery G, Lavelle Road; **When:** Open since February 26



02 Sew away

Small World is organising 'Sew much fun', an embroidery workshop. The workshop aims to offer a wonderful opportunity to explore the art of embroidery, in a relaxed and supportive environment. **Where:** Small World, Koramangala; **When:** March 3 to 16



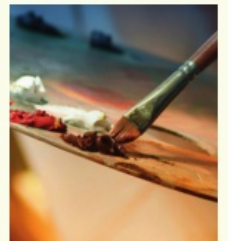
03 Dance spectacle

Experience the timeless legacy of Purandaradasaru through an enchanting thematic dance production. Witness a mesmerising blend of classical dance, music, and storytelling as accomplished artists bring to life the journey of the saint-composer. **Where:** Bangalore Gayana Samaja, KR Road; **When:** March 9, 6 pm



04 Play with colours

Little Boto Project is organising their Art Jamming Event, designed for everyone to relax, explore, and express themselves through art. The participants can choose from three exclusive themes, experiment with watercolors, pencils, and crayons. **Where:** Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; **When:** March 16



05 Artful honor

In honour of legendary dancer Rukmini Devi, for Smriti Pravah 2025, Archita Mehta's NrityaSadhana Centre for Bharatanatyam and Indian Folk Dances, and Tripti Bhupen's Samarpan School of Performing Arts, will take a journey into her creative world, where she preserved Bharatanatyam's traditions while innovating within its structure. **Where:** Bangalore International Centre, Domlur; **When:** March 9, 6 pm

06 Art exhibition

Museum of Art & Photography (MAP) is presenting 'We don't end at our edges', an immersive exhibition featuring artworks by Bengaluru-based artist, writer and educator Ravikumar Kashi. He uses paper to 'paint' letters from the Kannada alphabet, transforming language itself into a metaphor for the permeability of human connection. **Where:** Museum of Art & Photography, Infosys Foundation Gallery, Ground floor; **When:** Opening on March 8

FORM-IV (See Rule-8)

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Sd/-
R. J. PRAKASHAN
Printer & Publisher

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Health officials see red at watermelon tampering

In a shocking incident, red dye has been found to be used as an additive to enhance the colour of watermelons. Amidst growing awareness about food safety, a case of suspected adulteration has emerged in Kunigal. A local resident, Shivaram, filed a complaint after noticing an unusually high amount of red colouring in a watermelon he purchased. Acting on the complaint, taluk health officers inspected the shop, and temporarily shut it down. Shivaram had bought the watermelon from a vendor near Mahatma Gandhi School and Pre-University College, reportedly a trader from Tamil Nadu. While cutting the fruit at



home, he placed a white tissue paper on it, which quickly turned red. This raised suspicion, prompting him to alert municipal authorities. Upon inspection, officials from the municipality's health department confirmed the presence of excessive red dye in the fruit. The shop was immediately warned against further sales, and the matter was escalated to senior authorities. Food safety officers have launched an investigation into the case. Reports suggest that some traders inject chemicals such as nitrogen and oxytocin to accelerate watermelon growth. To enhance its red colour, substances like chromate, menthol yellow, and Sudan red dye are allegedly used. — BMB

RGUHS gets a new Vice-Chancellor

Dr BC Bhagawan, Principal and Professor of General Surgery at Kempegowda Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS), Bengaluru, has been appointed as the new Vice-Chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS). As reported by Bangalore Mirror earlier, for the first time, a professor from a private medical college has been appointed as the full-time Vice-Chancellor of a public university. Previously, Dr SM Jayakar, who was also from a private medical college, had served as the interim Vice-Chancellor for a few months. Dr Bhagawan has

earlier served as a Senate member of RGUHS. Governor Thawarchand Gehlot, in his capacity as Chancellor of the University, issued the appointment order on Saturday. Dr Bhagawan will be serving a three-year term or until he reaches the age of 65, whichever comes first, until further orders. The tenure of the previous Vice-Chancellor, Dr MK Ramesh, ended on February 10. A search committee led by former Vice-Chancellor of Rani Channamma University, Belagavi, Prof Ramachandragowda, was formed to select the new Vice-Chancellor. — BMB

In 6 months, fraudsters polish off woman's life savings

Posing as officials of various depts, they convince elderly couple that they are facing arrest, steal Rs 1.3 crore from them

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Senior citizens remain prime targets of 'digital arrest' scams, with a senior couple being the latest victims. The couple recently lost a staggering Rs 1.3 crore over six months to cyber fraudsters over an ordeal that lasted over six months, beginning in August last year. Impersonating officials from a mobile service provider, TRAI, cybercrime, police, and customs departments, the scammers deceived the victims through a series of manipulative phone and video calls.

The ordeal began on August 26, 2024, when the complainant received a call claiming that her mobile number would be disconnected due to an ongoing fraud investigation. The call was then transferred to an individual posing as a TRAI official, who falsely accused her of being



named in an FIR in Mumbai for allegedly purchasing a mobile number used in illegal activities.

As panic set in, the complainant was further tricked into believing that she was involved in money laundering cases linked to high-profile individuals. A fraudster, posing as a cybercrime officer, claimed that an arrest warrant had been issued against her. She was instructed to keep the matter confidential, not even informing her family, as it was a "national security investigation".

The fraudsters manipulated the victim into liquidating her savings, breaking fixed deposits, and pledging her gold jewellery and mutual funds. Under the pretext of verifying transactions and withdrawing the arrest warrant, they demanded multiple payments over time.

Between August 27 and February 15, 2025, the victim transferred a total of Rs 1.3 crore into accounts provided by the fraudsters.

Adding to the deception, on September 12, she received another call, allegedly from a

Mumbai police officer, claiming that her Aadhaar card had been misused to buy another mobile number.

The next day, a caller posing as a Delhi police officer accused her of being linked to an international parcel containing fake passports, ATM cards, and illicit substances. She was given two hours to pay Rs 30,000 online for bail or face immediate arrest along with her husband.

Throughout the six-month-long fraud, the victim was contacted via Skype and WhatsApp, with the fraudsters constantly changing their phone numbers for "security reasons". They continued to threaten her, ensuring that she remained silent and compliant. The scam only came to light when the calls abruptly stopped, prompting the victim to suspect foul play.

The victim has lost lifelong savings, and is facing extreme mental distress and health issues. A complaint has been registered under the CEN police station (East division) and further investigations are underway.

DGP Alok Mohan likely to get 4-month extension?

The Karnataka government has recommended a four-month extension for Director General of Police (DGP) Alok Mohan, causing a stir in the state police department. Alok Mohan was set to retire on April 30, 2024. However, discussions are underway about extending his tenure in line with a Supreme Court directive. The state government has forwarded its recommendation to the Union Home Ministry, and if approved, this would mark the first-ever tenure extension for a DGP in Karnataka.

Sources indicate that the recent IPS promotion list submitted to the Home Department, three months ahead of his scheduled retirement, did not mention Alok Mohan's name. The Supreme Court has mandated a minimum two-year tenure for state DGPs, which Alok Mohan has cited in his request for an extension. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Home Minister Dr. G. Parameshwara have reportedly responded positively to his plea.

Sources said that if Alok Mohan's tenure is extended, Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Alok Kumar's promotion to DGP may be delayed by three months. Alok Kumar was in line to succeed Mohan upon his retirement.

— BMB

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(After completion of Notice Period)

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Wheeling not a minor issue in Frazer Town

Residents of area say young children creating havoc on the roads as they perform stunts unchecked, citizens urge police patrolling and strict penalties

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Residents of Frazer Town have been facing a lot of problems due to reckless bike wheeling by wayward youths, especially minors. The residents alleged that the culprits were not locals, and that the area had become a destination for slap-happy youths.

It is said that senior citizens of the area are afraid of walking on the roads due to the menace of reckless bike-riders. "This morning as I was walking on Spencer Road at 6 am, I encountered three scooters, with three boys on each, doing wheelies and racing. Of course, no helmets, and three on a scooter seem to be the rule," said a senior citizen on the condition of anonymity. The senior citizen suggested that the area should have police patrolling to prevent accidents and pedestrians being harmed.

Noting that Ratan Singh Road, MM Road, and Spencer Road have turned into regular spots for reckless driving, the residents said that the shrill sounds are a nuisance, and cause disturbance for infants and senior citizens.

"I wonder how their parents allow them to be out of their homes so late at night, and it is every day. I am of the opinion that parents or guardians have to be responsible. They have to ensure that their



Citizens say seniors are scared to walk in the area due to the threats from speeding bikers performing stunts; Below: Grab from a CCTV footage shows two minors on a bike without helmets



Public must send photos of such vehicles if they come across wheeling or reckless driving

— Wasim Ahmed,
Frazer Town Traffic Circle Inspector

children do not misuse bikes," said Frazer Town Resident Welfare Association Organising Secretary Habiba Subhan. She stated that she has requested the Frazer Town Traffic Police to act on the issue. "I hope the Traffic Police will end this menace," she added.

Punish offenders

Demanding Frazer Town Traffic Police to penalise and punish the minors who ride bikes illegally, Iftekar Ahmed, a resident, said that it is the need of the hour to take severe action against those causing inconvenience and nuisance. "I appeal to Frazer Town Traffic Police to act tough against these anti-social elements to avoid any inconvenience to the residents during Ramzan," Iftekar Ahmed said.

Frazer Town Traffic Circle Inspector Wasim Ahmed said that the traffic police will act firmly against those indulging in wheeling and reckless driving. "I advise the public to send photos of such vehicles if they come across wheeling or reckless driving. We will register cases against those violating traffic norms," he said.

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Traffic snarl

Brunton Road



This vehicle is parked outside of a workspace in Brunton Road everyday, causing traffic jams.

Garbage pileup

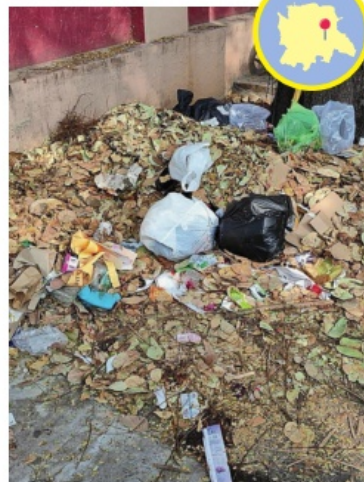
Sarvanagar



Trash remains uncollected on Davis Road, Ward 160, Sarvanagar, near Holy Ghost Church. An empty plot is being used as a dumping ground, causing an unbearable stench for apartment residents.

Debris dump

RT Nagar



12th Cross, RT Nagar 1st Block, has turned into a dumping ground for junk cars and garbage. Immediate action is needed.

Contaminated water leaves residents fearing for imminent health crisis

At Thanisandra Layout, fear of Cauvery supply lines getting mixed with sewage

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TWEETS @sridharvMirror

Residents of Vidyanagar Layout, in Thanisandra Ward 6, are grappling with a severe public health concern as sewage water contaminates the Cauvery water supply lines. In conversation with Bangalore Mirror, Ramesh, a resident, said that the issue surfaced approximately a month ago, following which residents had to shut off their water valves to prevent the inflow of polluted water.

"Despite numerous complaints lodged with the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), no remedial action has been taken to date," he said.

Residents said that the Cauvery water pipes in the area were

Efforts to identify and rectify source of contamination have been unsuccessful, due to a lack of coordination among BWSSB officials — Resident

installed three years ago, with test water flow commencing two months prior. Vidyanagar, a private layout incorporated into BWSSB's Phase V water supply plan covering 110 villages, initially received clean water. However, within a month, residents reported foul-smelling water, indicative of sewage contamination.

"Efforts to identify and rectify the source of contamination have been unsuccessful, with residents observing a lack of coordination

among BWSSB officials. Escalations to BWSSB's chairman have yielded no response," a resident stated.

Serious health risks

Residents expressed concern over contaminated water flowing into homes and posing severe medical risks, including waterborne diseases like cholera, typhoid, and dysentery, along with long-term health issues such as kidney damage, neurological disorders, and weakened immunity.

"Prolonged exposure to toxic chemicals and heavy metals in unsafe water can lead to developmental issues in children, reproductive problems, and even an increased risk of cancer. Access to clean water isn't just a necessity, it's a fundamental right that safeguards public health and ensures a better quality of life for all," a resident added.



Sewage collects on the road at Vidyanagar Layout in Thanisandra Ward

Traffic police want vloggers to spread road safety word

Popular motor content creators can use their platforms to stress on dangers of wheeling, other violations, say officials

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In a bid to curb traffic violations and promote responsible riding, the traffic police (BTP) organised an interactive session with motor vloggers at the Traffic Management Centre (TMC) on Saturday. The initiative aimed to leverage the influence of these content creators to spread awareness about road safety and responsible riding practices.

The session was attended by the Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) along with other senior officers, who provided the vloggers with first-hand experience of the city's advanced traffic management systems. They were given a tour of the Traffic Management Centre, the Traffic Police Museum, and the Traffic & Road Safety Experience Centre, where they witnessed how technology is being used to monitor and enforce traffic rules.

A significant part of the discussion focused on curbing dangerous road behaviours, including underage wheeling, racing, and stunt riding on public roads, issues that have increasingly become a concern in the city.

Motor vloggers, who command a large online audience, were encouraged to use their platforms to advocate for traffic discipline and responsible riding. Their engagement can serve as a powerful tool in shaping public perception and influencing young riders to adopt safer practices on the road.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) East, Traffic, Sahil Bagla, told BM about the importance of this initiative. "These



Motorists caught in traffic in this file photo from the city

Most wheeling occurs on high-speed corridors such as Airport Road, NICE Road, and flyovers. Vloggers traveling on these routes can have messages in their contents

—Sahil Bagla, DCP Traffic E

motor vloggers have a significant reach, especially among minors and young riders. If they use their platforms to convey the dangers of wheeling and the strict enforcement by Bengaluru Traffic Police, it can have a positive impact," he said.

Road safety message to be integrated

Beyond wheeling, the campaign will also focus on other critical road safety aspects,

including the importance of wearing helmets, maintaining lane discipline, adhering to speed limits, and other key traffic regulations.

The traffic police also showcased various technological interventions aimed at enhancing road safety, such as AI-driven traffic surveillance, automated enforcement of violations, and real-time monitoring of traffic congestion.

"The majority of wheeling incidents occur on high-speed corridors such as Airport Road, NICE Road, and city flyovers. As part of the initiative, vloggers traveling on these routes can integrate road safety messages into their content. They will highlight the dangers of wheeling, the legal consequences under various sections, and the ongoing efforts of the traffic police to curb such reckless behaviours," DCP East Traffic added. Additionally, they will use their vlogs to educate all road users on broader safety measures, he said.

Citizen stops delivery agents going against traffic flow

Avigilant resident near Dodanekundi's Bren Avalon apartments recently confronted delivery agents riding electric bikes against traffic flow.

In a video shared on social media, the resident is heard admonishing the riders: "Go back now. You are not wearing a helmet and riding in the wrong direction. You are delivery agents, right? I will complain if you don't turn back."

The incident has sparked discussions online, with many citizens expressing frustration over such traffic violations. One user commented on social media, "Fools like these are not just endangering their lives but others too. If only the police enforced rules with severity."

Traffic police crackdown

The traffic police on March 1, conducted a special drive targeting traffic violations

Highest number of violations were related to riding without a helmet with 582 cases booked

by e-commerce delivery riders, booking 1,859 cases and collecting a total fine of Rs 9,64,000. The operation was aimed at improving road safety and enforcing traffic discipline among delivery personnel who frequently violate rules due to time constraints and delivery pressures.

According to the press note issued by the traffic police, the highest number of violations were related to riding without a helmet – 582 cases booked, with fines amounting to Rs 2,91,000, No entry violations – 389 cases, fines totalling Rs 1,97,000, driving against one-way traffic – 354 cases, fines collected Rs 1,77,500,

Jumping traffic signals – 209 cases, fines amounting to Rs 1,04,500, Illegal parking – 98 cases, fines collected Rs 49,000, Riding on footpaths – 79 cases, fines totalling Rs 39,500, Causing obstruction to traffic – 148 cases, fines amounting to Rs 1,05,500.

The crackdown comes amid growing concerns over e-commerce delivery riders violating traffic rules, often leading to accidents and congestion. Officials stated that despite repeated warnings, delivery agents continue to engage in dangerous practices such as riding on footpaths, jumping signals, and driving against one-way traffic to meet delivery deadlines.

The traffic police have assured that special drives will continue and have urged e-commerce companies to educate their delivery personnel about traffic rules and encourage safer driving practices.

—Atiya Firdos

BM WoW Week

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FSSAI orders probe into plastic use for idli

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), under the central government, has taken serious note of reports that some eateries in Karnataka are using plastic sheets while preparing idlis. The authority has ordered a probe and strict action against such practices. Recently, the State's health department had issued an order banning the use of plastic sheets during food preparation, citing safety and hygiene concerns. The FSSAI has directed the state's Food Safety Department to ensure



BM's report on Mar 1 about plastic being used in some eateries

compliance with the ban. The FSSAI stressed that "strict action must be taken against plastic use". —BMB

Man found dead in car, family suspect foul play

A 42-year-old man was found dead inside his car near Kodigehalli Bridge on Sunday, with initial reports suggesting a heart attack. But, family members raised suspicions after noticing burn marks on his hand. The deceased has been identified as Ashwin Kumar, a resident of Mutyala

Nagar. His body was discovered inside his car, parked in front of a private hospital. Ashwin Kumar had left home earlier but became unreachable, prompting his family to alert the police. Upon tracking his location, officers arrived at the scene and found the car's glass shattered. —BMB

Karnataka bandh call for March 22

Condemning the attack on a KSRTC bus conductor and the alleged aggression by Marathi-speaking individuals against Kannadigas, several pro-Kannada organisations have called for a statewide bandh on March 22. The decision was taken during a meeting led by Vatal Nagaraj, president of Kannada

Okkoota. Speaking after the meeting, he announced that the bandh would be observed from 6 am to 6 pm. Additionally, Kannada Okkoota has planned a protest march to Raj Bhavan on March 3. "We urge auto and bus drivers across all districts to refrain from operating their vehicles on the bandh day." —BMB

Stride for safety: Women put city footpaths to test

5-km footpath route that started on Langford Road and went on to Hayes Road, with stops at heritage sites, declared safe for running as all women complete run comfortably

I Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Over 80 women from across the city came together for a 5 km heritage run on Sunday, to find out whether Bengaluru footpaths are safe for women.

The run started on Langford Road, near the Hockey Stadium, and wound its way past Rhenius Street, Richmond Road, Residency Road, Museum Road, St Mark's and Hayes Road, and took several detours enroute to explore lake beds, cul-de-sacs, and various heritage landmarks. The participants also paused at various institutions, several of which were over 150 years old.

The run was curated by Arun Pai of Bangalore WALKS in collaboration with Sisters in Sweat, and with active support from Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP).

One of the highlights of the run was the participation and celebration of female employees of BBMP, who toil at keeping our streets clean. 10 BBMP Lady Marshals from all over the city participated in the run, making this a true citizen-government partnership.

Arun Pai, founder of BangaloreWalks, and an active proponent of safe pedestrian spaces, said that he was amazed at the sheer number of women who participated, and their energy and enthusiasm to complete the entire 5 km route on footpaths. Noting that many of the women had never run more than 2 km before,



Participants, including BBMP Women Marshals, of the 5-km run held on Sunday morning



“The objective of the run was to identify safe public spaces for women

— Arun Pai, founder of BangaloreWalks

curated runs and walks to discover and enjoy what this city has to offer,” he added.

He said the objective of the run was to identify safe public spaces for women, as part of the BLR Footpath Challenge that has been on-going for the past 3 months, where citizens have walked and ran over 140 kms of the city's footpaths. “Several more such runs for women are being planned in the months ahead,” he highlighted. As all the women completed the run comfortably, without any notable incidents, the 5 km foot-

path route was certified safe for running.

Bhavani KG, a BBMP Marshal, expressed that she was elated to participate in the 5 km marathon.

Swetha Subbiah, co-founder of Sisters in Sweat, said that Arun Pai's initiatives with BLR Walks are unique, and offer a fantastic experience. She stated that the initiatives were in perfect harmony with the goal of Sisters in Sweat, which is to create safe spaces for women to come together, and be physically active, while building a strong, supportive ecosystem of sisterhood. Talking about one of their upcoming initiatives, she said, “The Sistra Run, on March 30, at Ecoworld Bellandur, will be Bengaluru's biggest women's run and will enunciate our purpose of empowerment through movement.”

150 acres for Film City near Mysuru

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has announced the construction of a world-class hi-tech Film City on 150 acres near Mysuru to facilitate modern technology-driven filmmaking. Speaking at the inauguration of the 16th Bengaluru International Film Festival (BIFF) on Saturday, he stated that the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) has transferred land to the Information and Public Relations Department for this purpose. “The Film City will be equipped with state-of-the-art facilities and cutting-edge technology. Our government has always stood by the film industry, as cinema reflects society and plays a key role in bringing positive change,” the Chief Minister said by emphasising that cinema should serve as a medium to foster social harmony and not promote regressive ideas. He pointed out the stark economic disparity in the country, where 1% of the population controls 50% of the wealth, leading to unrest and dissatisfaction in society. “This festival is conceptualised as a ‘Garden of Peace’ for all communities. Films should be made with a vision to inspire unity and progress,” he stated. — BMB

Halasuru temple hosts Ratha Yatra

Sri Swayambu Kali Amman Temple in Halasuru hosted its historic Ratha Yatra procession celebrations on Sunday.

The event, which took place from 9 am onwards, featured a newly crafted teak wood chariot adorned with intricate carvings and ornate decorations. Accompanied by traditional Kerala's famous Chantavadiam music and chanting, the chariot was pulled through the temple's surroundings, creating a mesmerising spectacle. The procession concluded with a mass feeding (Annadanam) program, reinforcing the temple's commitment to serving the community. — BMB



Kali Amman Temple Chariot procession at Halasuru on Sunday

NOTES FROM THE FIELD



MLA turns good Samaritan

Talk about being at the right place at the right time! Magadi MLA HC Balakrishna was on his way to a program in Maddur on Sunday when he witnessed a shocking accident near Hotel Thimmadas—a KSRTC bus and an auto had collided, leaving passengers in distress. Without a second thought, the quick-thinking MLA sprang into action. He personally helped lift the injured and rushed six people to the Maddur Government Hospital—in his own car!

Ramp ready for CM

With the Karnataka Legislative Session set to kick off on March 3, the Vidhana Soudha is

getting a special VIP upgrade—a custom-built ramp at the West Gate (Kengal Gate)—to accommodate Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's mobility needs. The CM has been grappling with knee pain for weeks, making walking a challenge. Doctors have advised him six weeks of rest, and he's been relying on a wheelchair for official engagements. With the all-important 2025-26 Budget Presentation scheduled for March 7, arrangements have been made to ensure his smooth movement inside the Assembly. Among the four entry points of Vidhana Soudha, three have existing camp setups, but the CM's preferred entry is through the West Gate. Hence, a special ramp has been installed there for hassle-free access. Government insiders confirmed, “The West Gate is CM Siddaramaiah's usual entry point. To ensure his comfort during the session, we've constructed a dedicated ramp at this entrance.”

Prickly response

During a recent press interaction, former

Deputy CM KS Eshwarappa was asked if he had wished his Guru turned arch-rival BS Yediyurappa on his birthday. But instead of a simple yes or no, Eshwarappa fired back with a punchy response. “He is my Guru—I don't need to formally wish him. Do you wish your father on your birthday?” he shot back at the journalist. Taking a not-so-subtle dig at the media, he continued, “You need to change your thinking. Whatever I am today is because of my parents, the RSS, and yes, even BSY. Just like I remember my parents every day, I remember him too. Stop politicising everything!”

Time to tighten the bolts!

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has warned the film fraternity stating, “If you don't even turn up for your own events, what's the point? At least take this as a gentle reminder—if not, consider it a warning. The government controls film permits, so remember, we know exactly which bolts to tighten!” During a recent event, Shivakumar said, “Cinema should stand by our land, lan-

guage, and water struggles. But where was Sandalwood when we fought for Makedatu? The lack of support from the film fraternity is both disappointing and infuriating!” Shivakumar wasn't done yet. “I have a bone to pick with the film industry, actors, and the Film Chamber. We walked 150 km during the Makedatu padayatra to secure drinking water for Bengaluru—not for personal gain but for the state's welfare. Even after extending a direct invitation, barring a couple of actors, the rest didn't bother to show up!” he lamented.

Tough Budget ahead?

“The upcoming state budget is facing serious challenges,” said Law and Tourism Minister HK Patil. He told reporters that the central government is not releasing Karnataka's due funds, making the budget preparation process highly challenging. However, he expressed confidence that CM Siddaramaiah will skillfully present a budget that ensures justice for all. Meanwhile, dismissing rumours of a cabinet reshuffle, Patil called speculation about replacing seven ministers baseless. “There is no truth to these discussions,” he clarified. — Sridhar Vivan

Budget Session from today

Up for debate: Funds for govt guarantees, hike in bus, Metro fares, rising tariffs

The Karnataka Assembly session is set to commence on Monday, with several contentious issues likely to spark heated debates in both houses. These include the delay in releasing funds for government guarantees, lack of grants for development projects, the KPSC recruitment scandal, the hike in bus and metro fares, decisions on university closures, and the alleged unfair tax devolution from the central government. The opposition is also expected to raise concerns over the Centre's delay in approving various state projects.

Governor Thawarchand Gehlot will address a joint session on the opening day. His stance on various bills, for which he had earlier expressed reservations in a letter to the government, is a subject of keen interest. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is set to present his record 16th budget on March 7, with expectations high on how he will balance financial constraints and fulfill the government's guarantee schemes.

Session to continue till March 21

Throughout the session, key issues like fare hikes in public transport, rising electricity and water tariffs, micro-finance harassment, and delays in fund disbursement for government guarantees are expected to dominate discussions. The opposition BJP and JD(S) are gearing up to target the government, citing lapses in governance, the KPSC scam, and the ongoing tussle



Workers clean the walls of the Vidhana Soudha, on Sunday

New Bill Mandating Reserved Funds for SC/ST Communities

In a move to strengthen the Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan (SCP-TSP) Act, the Karnataka government has decided to mandate all local bodies, corporations, and government boards to allocate and spend a fixed percentage of funds based on the SC/ST population. This will expand and reinforce the SCP-TSP Act introduced in 2014.

A draft bill ensuring population-based fund allocation for SC/STs in local bodies and other government entities has been prepared and will be tabled during the legislative session. The law, once enacted, will make it compulsory for municipal and rural local bodies to reserve and utilise funds exclusively for SC/ST communities beyond their usual revenue sources.

sle between the Governor and the state government. In response, the ruling Congress is prepared to counterattack by highlighting issues such as the Kunha Committee report on covid-19, legal cases against HD Kumaraswamy, and the Centre's

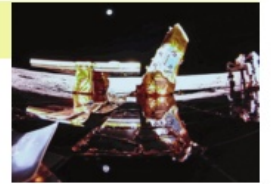
reluctance to approve projects like the Mahadayi, Krishna, and Mekedatu river schemes. The Congress will also use statistics to highlight Karnataka's reduced share in central taxes and its exclusion from key allocations in the Union Budget. **BMB**

AROUND THE WORLD

On the moon

A private lunar lander carrying a drill, vacuum and other experiments for NASA touched down on the moon Sunday, the latest in a string of companies looking to kickstart business on Earth's celestial neighbour ahead of astronaut missions. Firefly Aerospace's Blue Ghost lander descended from lunar orbit on autopilot, aiming for the slopes of an ancient volcanic dome in an impact basin on the moon's

north-eastern edge of the near side. Confirmation of successful touchdown came from the company's Mission Control outside Austin, Texas, following the action some 225,000 miles (360,000 km) away. "You all stuck the landing. We're on the moon," Firefly's Will Coogan, chief engineer for the lander, reported. **AP**



Israel cuts off Gaza aid

Israel stopped the entry of all goods and supplies into the Gaza Strip on Sunday and warned of "additional consequences" if Hamas doesn't accept a new proposal to extend a fragile ceasefire. Hamas accused Israel of trying to derail the existing ceasefire agreement and said its decision to cut off aid was "cheap extor-

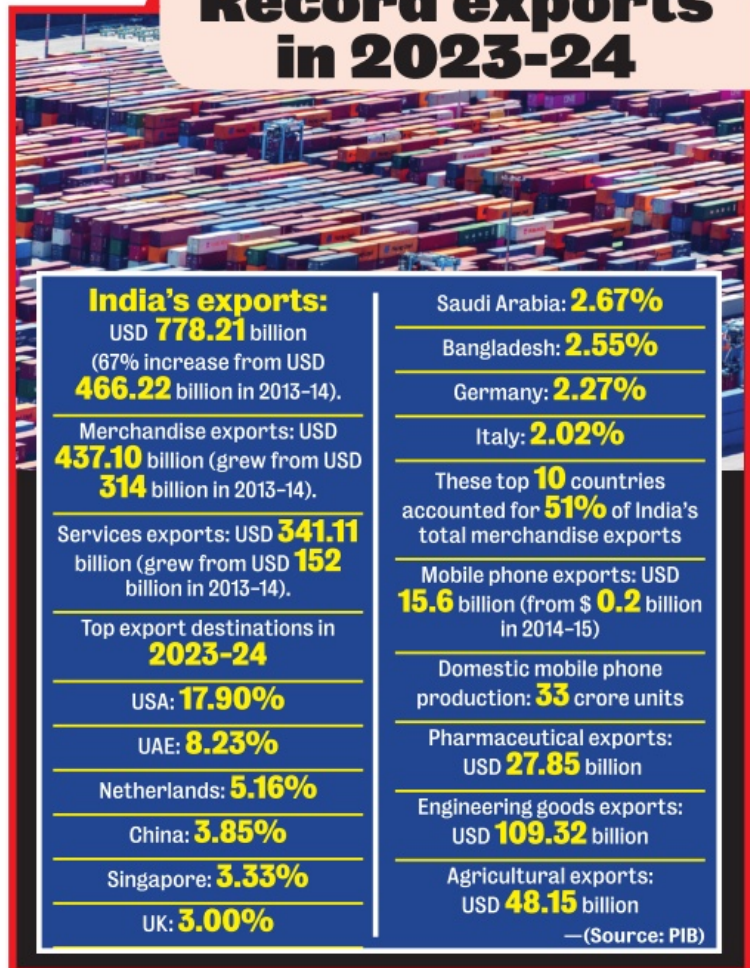
tion, a war crime and a blatant attack" on the truce, which took hold in January after more than a year of negotiations. Both sides stopped short of saying the ceasefire had ended. The first phase of the ceasefire that included a surge in humanitarian assistance, expired on Saturday. The two sides have yet to negotiate the second phase. **AP**

Protests against Musk hit Tesla stores

Across the US, protests erupted outside Tesla dealerships, targeting CEO Elon Musk in response to his controversial actions and his close alignment with President Donald Trump. Demonstrators voiced their opposition to Musk's push for slashing government spending and restructuring federal agencies, particularly under the banner of Trump's administration. These protests are part of a

broader movement against Musk's political involvement, which critics argue undermines Congressional authority and benefits his personal business interests. Demonstrators across various cities, including Boston, New York, and Palo Alto, California, gathered in an effort to publicly challenge Musk's influence over both government spending and policy decisions. **IANs**

Record exports in 2023-24



CLOSER HOME

Court orders FIR against Madhabi Buch

A Mumbai special court has ordered the launching of an FIR against former SEBI Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch and five others over alleged financial fraud, regulatory violations, and corruption, a court order showed. An application was filed before the Special ACB Court in Mumbai by the complainant—Sapan Shrivastava, a Thane-based legal news reporter—seeking directions to the concerned police station for the registration of an FIR and investigation into alleged offenses committed by the accused, which includes Buch. The complainant alleged a large-



scale financial fraud, regulatory violations, and corruption. The allegations pertain to an alleged fraudulent listing of a company on the stock exchange. It was alleged that the fraudulent activity was done with the active connivance of regulatory authorities. **ANI**

Water of Ganga in Bihar not fit for bathing: Survey

The water of the Ganga river in Bihar is not fit for bathing at most places in the state due to the presence of a higher value of "bacteriological population", according to the Bihar Economic Survey 2024-25. The Bihar State Pollution Control Board (BSPCB) monitors the water quality of the Ganga at 34 locations in the state on a fortnightly basis, officials said. According to the Economic Survey recently tabled in the state assembly, "The water quality of Ganga indicates the presence of a higher value of bacteriological population (total coliform and faecal coliform). This is mainly due to the discharge of sewage/domestic waste water from cities located on the banks of Ganga and her tributaries." The survey cited the latest water quality test results of the BSPCB. **PTI**

Union Minister's daughter harassed

In a shocking incident, Union Minister of State Raksha Khadse's daughter and three other girls were molested by a group of miscreants. The incident took place during the Sant Mukta Yatra (holy fair)

in Kothali village of Muktainagar taluka of Jalgaon district in Maharashtra on Friday night. Based on the minister's security guard, the Muktainagar police lodged a case on early Saturday morning under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, IT Act and Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita. The police have detained one person so far. Raksha Khadse, MP from Raver

Constituency in Jalgaon district and daughter-in-law of former BJP veteran Eknath Khadse has taken an aggressive posture demanding strict action against those involved in the molestation of her daughter. "If the daughter of one Union minister and an MP is being molested, what about others? I will meet the Chief Minister and demand more action regarding such incidents?" asked angry Raksha Khadse. **PTI**

Funds released for guarantee scheme panels, but Gruha Lakshmi beneficiaries await payment

While beneficiaries of the Gruha Lakshmi scheme have not received payments for the past three months, the Karnataka government has released the entire year's honorarium for district and taluk-level chairpersons of the Guarantee Scheme Implementation Authority Committee.

These funds were credited to their accounts in February. Sources said that the State and District Implementation Committees were formed in March 2024 to ensure effective execution and monitoring of the five guarantee schemes. The Personnel and Administrative Reforms Department had issued an order regarding these appointments.

However, due to financial constraints, honorarium payments were delayed—until now. In

February 2025, the government released a total of ₹18.75 crore for committee chairpersons and members, bringing relief to Congress workers, many of whom hold key positions in these committees.

Honorarium and allowances details

Initially, the government considered providing ₹50,000 per month as an honorarium to district committee chairpersons but later finalised it at ₹40,000 per month, while taluk committee chairpersons receive ₹25,000 per month.

Committee members are entitled to allowances when attending meetings, with district committee members receiving ₹1,100 per meeting and taluk committee members ₹100 per meeting.

The government has released

the necessary funds for the current financial year. Many district and taluk committee chairpersons are close aides or family members of MLAs and former legislators, placing the state government in a dilemma—either bear the financial burden of paying honorariums or risk angering party workers.

Sources said that eventually, in February 2025, the government decided to release the funds, ensuring that workers remained satisfied.

The ₹18.75 crore disbursement includes ₹1.48 crore annually for district committee chairpersons across 31 districts, ₹7.29 crore annually for taluk committee chairpersons across 243 taluks, and ₹9.97 crore annually for 4,110 committee members. The total amount has now been credited. —BMB

Champions Trophy: Varun Chakaravathy's fifer helps India set up semis clash with Australia

Varun Chakaravathy led India's charge with a superb 5-42, the best figures by a bowler in the ongoing tournament, as India beat New Zealand by 44 runs in the final Group A match at the Dubai International Stadium on Sunday.

The win means India finish as Group A toppers and will now face Australia in the first semi-final in Dubai on Tuesday, in what is a re-match of the 2023 ODI World Cup final. New Zealand, meanwhile, will take on South Africa in the second semi-final at Gaddafi Stadium on Wednesday, with both teams flying together to Lahore on Monday.

After Shreyas Iyer's 79 helped India reach 249/9 in 50 overs, Chakaravathy deceived the Blackcaps batters with his pace and variations to finish with 5-42 in his ten overs on Champions Trophy debut and bowl them out for 205 in 45.3 overs.

For New Zealand, Kane Williamson waged a lone battle through his 81 off 120 balls on a tricky pitch, where he



relied on nudges, glances and inside-out shots for boundaries. But with the Indian spin quartet applying the squeeze in middle overs and taking nine wickets, it meant that the match went in the way of Rohit Sharma & Co.

India could have got their first wicket in the fourth over if Will Young's catch wasn't dropped by Chakaravathy at mid-on off Hardik Pandya's bowling, with the fielder kicking the ball off the boot for four. But four balls later, Pandya provided the early breakthrough as Rachin Ravindra upper-cut to deep

third, who took a low diving catch. Though Young and Williamson hit some tight boundaries, India didn't let them go off the hook as New Zealand made 44/1 in the first power-play. Varun Chakaravathy, who got enough turn in his first over, got on the wickets board by having Young inside-edge a googly onto his stumps. —IANS

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I, Kailash Kumar Bhandari S/o Jethmal R/o 66, 3rd flr Sankeshwar villa, Rama Iyengar Rd, V V Puram, Bengaluru 560004 have changed my name to Kailash Kumar Affidavit Dt.01/03/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

MY Son sagar K. N Born on 18/10/2010 Residing at No 148, 3rd cross singapura garden Layout, Singapura, Chikabavara post Bengaluru, shall henceforth be known as SAGAR NARESH BABU. Naresh babu (Father)

I Rabiya Basri N W/O, Abdul Azeed R/o #174/b, 2nd Main, Ilyas Nagar, J.p Nagar, Bangalore 560078 have changed my name to Rabiya Basri.

I, Radhika Ramaprasad R/o B-11, Uniworth Tranquil Apt, Doddabele Road, Kengeri Bengaluru 560060 Have changed my name to Radhika Ramprasad Affidavit Dt: 27/02/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I Vidya Javai W/O Prateek Kudari R/o #104, First Floor, VKR Paradise, BHCS Layout, Subramanyapura, Bengaluru-560061 have changed my name to Vidya Kudari for all purposes.

I, Prasad Babu R/O Block No 2, Flat No 103, Serene Urbana, Ozone Urbana, NH44, Devanahalli, Blr-562110 changed my name from Prasad Babu Veerabhadran to Prasad Babu for all future purposes.

I Sandhya Ellanki residing at FF-7, 4th Floor, Shivaganga Samrudhi, 3rd Cross, 3rd Main, AGS Layout, Bengaluru-560061, have changed my name to V Sandhya Ravi for all purposes.

I Narayana V residing at No E508, Vaddarapalya, Kammasandra Palya, Electronics City, Bengaluru-560100 have changed my name to Narayana C for all purposes.

I, Nilam Naratan Baid R/o. 176, 18th cross, 15th Main, M C layout, Vijayanagar, Bangalore 560040 Changed my name as Nilam Bhutoria W/o. Pawan Bhutoria.

Revenue loss of ₹19.7 cr from govt buildings

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

with 'A' Khata documents instead of 'B' Khata, violating legal provisions. Furthermore, property tax accounts were registered without collecting mandatory improvement charges from property owners, depriving the administration of crucial revenue.

One of the most alarming findings of the audit is that revenue officials, in collusion with property owners, misappropriated Rs 122.98 crore that should have been collected as property tax. In light of these revelations, auditors have recommended recovering Rs 95.40 crore from the corrupt officials involved in the scam.

Illegal khata conversions

The audit report highlighted a glaring instance found where 6.05 acres of agricultural land converted for industrial use was illegally transferred to an education institute without proper documentation. Despite the lack of approval for educational use, officials issued an 'A' Khata instead of 'B' Khata, violating legal norms. Similarly, in another case, a 741 sq. ft. property under 'B' Khata was illegally upgraded to 'A' Khata by revenue officials, allegedly for personal gain.

Improvement charges not collected

The report also highlighted that BBMP failed to collect improvement charges amounting to Rs 6.17 crore from properties converted for non-agricultural use in newly added areas since 2007. The report revealed that

officials had either ignored or undercharged these fees, further adding to the financial loss.

Unpaid taxes on mobile towers

The audit report also flagged non-collection of Rs 8.06 crore in property taxes from 3,427 mobile towers across the city. Although the BBMP issued notices in 2015-16, officials failed to enforce tax collection.

Huge losses from government properties

Despite existing property tax rules mandating tax collection from both state and central government buildings, the BBMP failed to recover Rs 19.77 crore from such properties. Additionally, Rs 4.25 crore remains uncollected from schools and colleges. In several cases, revenue officials deliberately under-assessed property areas, leading to lower tax calculations. The report estimated a revenue loss of Rs 1.19 crore due to this malpractice.

Rs 84.03 crore pending improvement charges

The report revealed that improvement charges amounting to ₹84.03 crore remain uncollected from properties in areas like Begur, Marathahalli, Uttarahalli, and Rajarajeshwari Nagar—further exposing lapses in revenue collection. Reacting to this, a senior BBMP official said, "No official is above the law. Action will be taken against those found guilty of misappropriating public funds. Citizens should report any irregularities to the authorities."

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MAR: 4*, 9, 16, 16*, 23, 30 APR: 6, 13, 20, 27
SHIRDI NASIK/PANCH JYOTIRLINGA* 7 DAYS
MAR: 10*, 16, 17*, 30, 31* APR: 6, 7*, 13, 14*, 20*, 21, 27, 28*
ANDHRA PRADESH/HYDERABAD* 10/6* DAYS
MARCH: 13, 16*, 23, 23* APR: 2, 6*, 12, 13*, 20*, 22, 27*
SOUTH INDIA 11 DAYS EX: HUBLI
MAR: 13, APR: 1, 12, 23
SOUTH INDIA 7/10* DAYS EX: MANGALORE
MAR: 10, 13*, 17, 23*



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Focus on the plastic problem

Yes, paper straws suck. Rather than bring back plastic ones, let's avoid single-use items



When US President Donald Trump ordered federal agencies to return to plastic straws, claiming the paper version is ineffective and "disgustingly dissolves in your mouth", he was widely criticised for setting back efforts to reduce plastic pollution. But many alternatives designed to help phase out single-use plastics don't really solve the problem at all.

It's not unusual to see plastic bans challenged or overturned. However, a government ban on the substitute is altogether new.

It's true paper straws can disintegrate and become soggy before we finish a drink. Problems with finding viable substitutes to single-use plastics is one of the many challenges involved in phasing them out.

Sometimes, swapping one single-use item for another really is more trouble than it's worth. A better approach would be to change our society's single-use and disposal mindset.

The problem with plastic
Plastic pollution is an urgent problem for the environment and human health. Microplastics are everywhere, from Antarctica to our brains.

Plastic is made from fossil fuels, and so contributes to global warming. What's more, plastic production is forecast to triple by 2050.

But recycling is difficult. Less than 10% of the world's plastic has been recycled.

So we need to reduce our use of plastic in the first place, rather than trying to clean it up afterwards.

Poor substitutes and other traps

Trump rejected paper straws, saying they "don't work" as well as plastic

straws. The poor consumer experience of drinking through a soggy straw is one thing, but there are other problems too.

Swapping one problematic or hazardous material for another is sometimes called "regrettable substitution", because the replacement has its own issues. For example, one harmful chemical used to make plastics is often replaced with others that are as bad or worse.

Paper straws, like paper cups, are often coated with plastics such as polyethylene or acrylic resin. This makes them difficult to recycle but also raises the risk of pollution. Some paper straws have been shown to contain more "forever chemicals" (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS) than plastic.

Along with paper, other plant-based materials such as corn starch and bamboo are increasingly replacing single-use plastics – especially in food packaging. These substitutes carry a cost that is passed down to consumers, and many are more expensive to produce than plastic.

Some are labelled "compostable" or "biodegradable". The term compostable suggests they will break down in home compost heaps or green waste bins, but that has been called into question.

Unfortunately, the term "biodegradable" does not necessarily mean a material will break down in home compost, or even landfill. It may require heat or pressure – in an industrial setting – for it to disintegrate enough to be harmless or safely used in your garden.

When it comes to straws, paper, bamboo, metal and glass have all

been adopted as substitutes. Metal and glass straws could be dangerous for kids and less able-bodied people. They can also be hard to clean. Again, "biodegradable plastic" products have been accused of greenwashing and have been banned from organic composting bins in New South Wales and potentially Victoria because they don't disintegrate well or are contaminated.

Meanwhile, thicker plastic bags labelled "reusable" have been introduced following bans on lightweight "single-use" plastic bags. While these durable bags may be reused for months at a time, they will eventually wear out and then they are even harder to break down in landfill.

Plastic bans can be problematic

Governments all over the world have attempted to ban single-use plastic. Often these bans are introduced without considering how the products are used in daily life and how those services will be

replaced. The changes may disadvantage certain groups and new supply chains need to be created.

Often, governments wanting to be seen as protecting the environment target the low-hanging fruit such as plastic straws and plastic bags, rather than packaging as a whole.

So it's no surprise these bans have faced opposition. Many have already been repealed or diluted.

In India, for example, the plastic ban was criticised for shifting the burden of waste management

away from larger, more polluting industries on to smaller businesses. Larger establishments were also accused of passing the costs of substitute packaging, such as more expensive paper and cloth, to consumers.

Better to avoid single-use items

It's time to stop searching for the perfect substitute. Let's instead focus on getting rid of single-use items altogether.

Remember, straws were originally used for very specific cases and places: very young children and others unable to drink straight from a cup. They might still need straws.

Single-use bottles are unnecessary. We should learn from Germany's glass bottle reuse system and set up circular loops of production and distribution.

Get serious about reducing plastic packaging

While some packaging – even some plastics – is needed for food safety and freshness, an overhaul of unnecessary packaging would go a long way.

In the United Kingdom, anti-waste charity WRAP examined fresh produce in supermarkets and called for the government to ban packaging on 21 fruits and vegetables sold in supermarkets by 2030. These included cucumbers, bananas and potatoes.

Removing unnecessary packaging and plastics involves reconfiguring social rules, knowledge, standards and expectations such as making items without packaging affordable and widely available. We must challenge our disposable society by creating spaces and practices that allow reuse.

Better policies and regulations

Policies that prevent plastics from reaching consumers in the first place would be better than bans on single-use items.

Governments should put the onus on the corporations that have profited from plastic and their role in plastic pollution.

Supermarkets and the food industry as a whole must also take responsibility for their part in the plastic waste problem.

Voluntary codes have not worked. Government regulation levels the playing field, but industry expertise and technical and social knowledge is needed to ensure systems work. While not without its challenges, Australia's tyre recycling system has addressed many similar issues. The scheme's approach to developing a national market for used tyres could be replicated for plastics, packaging and glass.

Meaningful change for our environment and health requires government regulations done well and fairly. It also requires coordinated waste infrastructure and industry practices that build on technical expertise and consumers' lived experience.

(By Bhavna Middha, Kajsa Lundberg and Ralph Horne, RMIT University, The Conversation)



All you need to know about...

Brain's role in obesity

Sweet taste Control centre

A new study has offered intriguing new insights into the origins of type 2 diabetes and obesity, as well as the brain's function as a critical control centre.

Insulin

The hormone insulin plays a key role in the development of obesity. Up until recently, there have been numerous signs indicating insulin causes neurodegenerative and metabolic disorders, especially in the brain. The latest study by the University Hospital of Tübingen, the German Center for Diabetes Research (DZD), and Helmholtz Munich now offers new insights.

What insulin does in brain

Unhealthy body fat distribution and chronic weight gain are linked to the brain's sensitivity to insulin. What specific functions does insulin perform in the brain, and how does it affect individuals of normal weight?

In their study, published in the journal Nature Metabolism, Professor Dr. Stephanie Kullmann and her colleagues at the Tübingen University Hospital for Diabetology, Endocrinology, and Nephrology found the answer to this query. "Our findings demonstrate for the first time that even a brief consumption of highly processed, unhealthy foods (such as chocolate bars and potato chips) causes a significant alteration in the brain of healthy individuals, which may be the initial cause of obesity and type 2 diabetes," Kullmann explained.

Appetite-suppressing
In a healthy state, insulin has an appetite-suppressing effect in the brain.

However, in people with obesity in particular, insulin no longer regulates eating behaviour properly, resulting in insulin resistance.

— IANS

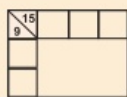
Plastic is made from fossil fuels, and so contributes to global warming; plastic production is forecast to triple by 2050 and recycling it is difficult

$$2^*a + 2^*a + 2^*a + 2^*a + 2^*a = 80$$

$$a=?$$

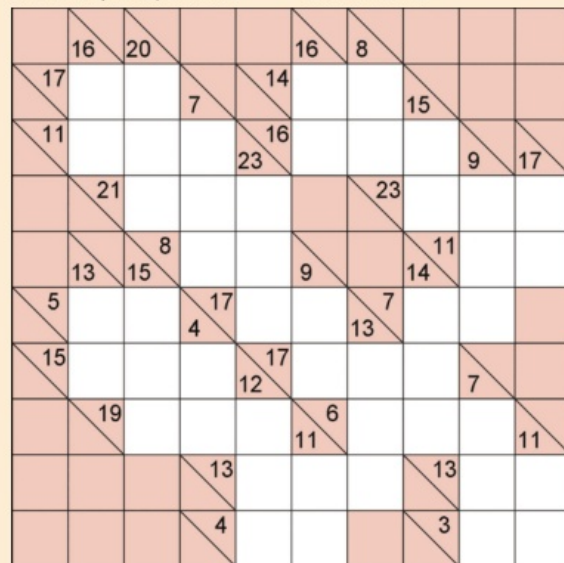
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

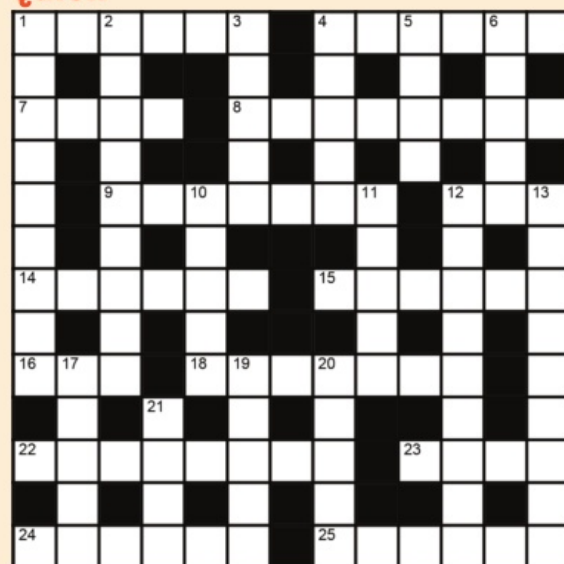


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

- 1 Suave, bland (6)
- 4 Fix or straighten (6)
- 7 Buy and sell (4)
- 8 Golf trophy—"Cry prude" anagram? (5,3)
- 9 Karnataka's first Chief Minister (1,1,5)
- 12 Superlative suffix (3)
- 14 Dislike intensely (6)
- 15 Polish composer (6)
- 16 Fashion monogram (3)
- 18 Festive rubber sac (7)
- 22 From the start—in Latin (2,6)
- 23 Teller of falsehoods (4)
- 24 Public speaker (6)
- 25 Confections (6)

DOWN

- 1 Perform with restraint (9)
- 2 Reject or boycott (9)
- 3 Eagle's nest (5)
- 4 Assisted (5)
- 5 Sounds discordantly (4)
- 6 Avoids or ignores (5)
- 10 Recovery prog. (5)
- 11 Coarse brute (5)
- 12 Pricey (9)
- 13 Medicinal solutions (9)
- 17 Serious and solemn (5)
- 19 Moving (5)
- 20 Oddballs; eccentric persons (5)
- 21 Make a cardigan (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: H EQUALS G
IAVIASGUM KWZ W ASHSB
XWZUGA, YEU VTG URWU
XEZU YG VYGMGB SN
VTG KWTUGB UV QGGI W
ZUGADSTH AGIEUWUSVT.



Linemaro

I could drown in your eyes



Mindchow

What lies in our power to do, lies in our power not to do



Joke of the day

Pavlov is sitting at a pub enjoying a pint. The phone rings and he jumps up shouting, "Oh shit, I forgot to feed the dog!"

Loop

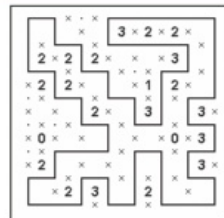
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

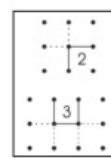
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) - Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

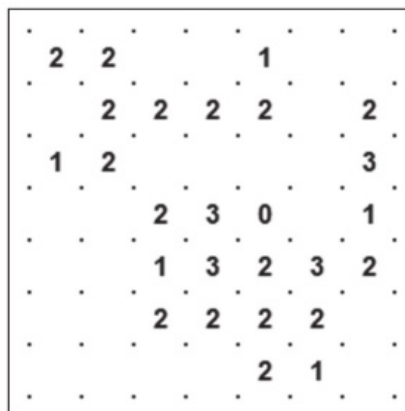
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



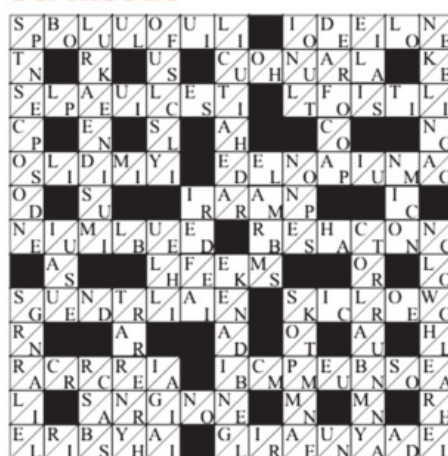
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



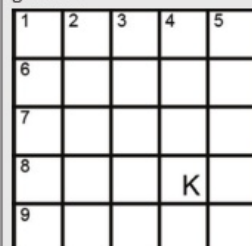
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

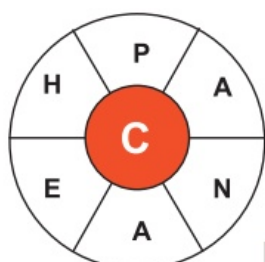
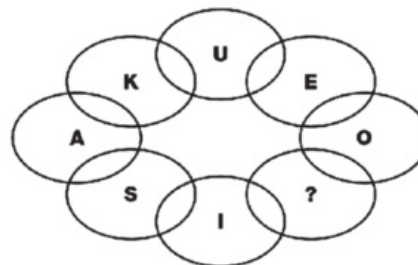
- 1 Paces; 6 I a pod;
- 7 Any is; 8 Pokes;
- 9 Sumos

DOWN

- 1 Map as; 2 Coy up;
- 3 As ldo; 4 On kip;
- 5 Sees a

Mensapuzzle

Which letter replaces the question mark and completes the sequence?



Bull's eye

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

08 Average; 09 Good; 11 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge



To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy

□ □ □ □ □ = 19

2 2 6 9

Medium

□ □ □ □ □ = 2

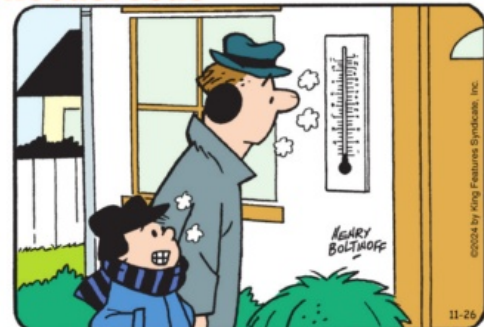
3 4 5 9

Hard

□ □ □ □ □ = 23

3 7 9 3

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Thermometer is missing. 2. Window in door is lower. 3. Mouth is open. 4. Roof is smaller. 5. Scarf is different. 6. Windowill is missing.

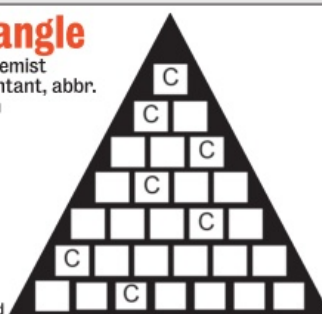
My history is long in telling, Though my origins are unknown. I watch the tender earth most carefully, Clothed in discards long disowned. I guard against the rancorous poachers, Praying for a gust of wind that will animate my lifeless form. The autumn winds will signal the completion of my job. Maybe if I had a brain I'd choose to move south for the winter. Who am I?

Riddler

Alpha triangle

- 1 Carbon for the chemist
- 2 Chartered Accountant, abbr.
- 3 Anatomical pouch
- 4 High cards
- 5 Cheekiness
- 6 Sentence part
- 7 Not religious

Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be



made at each step answering to the clue given.

COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip



Diamond Lil



Hart of the city



Crankshaft



Mutts



WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 - Apr 20

With the blessings of Jupiter and the Moon, today brings recognition and rewards for your social services. Your seniors may appreciate your efforts, leading to potential promotions. Financially, past losses may turn into profits, boosting liquidity in your business. You may plan to invest additional capital in your family business, ensuring future growth.



Leo Jul 24 - Aug 23

Happiness surrounds you today, as past losses may transform into profits. Your hard work will be acknowledged, and seniors may appreciate your efforts, leading to potential promotions or new responsibilities. Hidden enemies and opponents will be under control. Singles and couples may make important marriage-related decisions with the support of family and friends.



Sagittarius Nov 23 - Dec 22

Your enthusiasm and dedication at work will bring positive outcomes. Your performance will improve your relationship with seniors, potentially leading to new responsibilities and promotions. Legal matters may bring good news, and hidden enemies will no longer pose a threat.



Taurus Apr 21 - May 20

A sense of happiness and well-being will uplift your spirit today. Your health remains strong, enhancing your self-confidence. Your integrity will guide you in maintaining a good reputation. Additionally, your social prestige is likely to rise, strengthening your influence in your community.



Virgo Aug 24 - Sep 23

The positive influence of the Moon blesses you with good health. A visit to a religious place with family or friends may bring spiritual fulfillment. You might consider making charitable donations. Property deals could be finalized, and work-related overseas travel plans may be set in motion.



Capricorn Dec 23 - Jan 20

Difficult tasks will be completed effortlessly today, boosting your confidence. Past investments may yield good returns. However, it's advised to avoid unnecessary arguments, as they may waste your valuable time.



Gemini May 21 - Jun 21

You might experience disappointment today. Controlling your arrogance is essential, as careless words could lead to losses or misunderstandings. Lovebirds should handle discussions with care, as disagreements could strain the relationship.



Libra Sep 24 - Oct 22

You may face conspiracies today, so it's best to stay away from conflicts and controversies. Your strong willpower and the blessings of elders will help you navigate challenges. Avoid unnecessary arguments in your love life and be cautious while driving or engaging in adventure activities.



Aquarius Jan 21 - Feb 19

Today might feel challenging, leaving you unhappy or dissatisfied with your current situation. Patience is key, so avoid making impulsive decisions. Prioritize the well-being of your parents and offer them care and attention.



Cancer Jun 22 - July 23

A peaceful mind will help you make wise decisions. You may consider investing capital in business, improving financial stability and liquidity. Your earnings will strengthen your financial health. Romantic moments with your spouse will enhance harmony in your family life. Singles may find a suitable match, and lovebirds could make important decisions about marriage. Students will be supported by positive karma.



Scorpio Oct 23 - Nov 22

A day filled with happiness and mental peace awaits you. Your focus on your goals will be sharp, helping you make significant progress. Romantic moments with your spouse will strengthen your bond. Domestic responsibilities may keep you occupied, but they will bring satisfaction.



Pisces Feb 20 - Mar 20

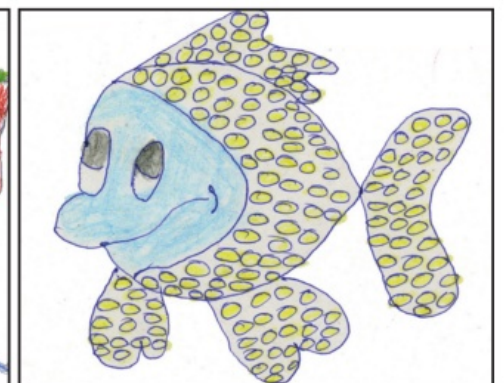
Your enthusiasm and sharp focus will drive success today. Achieving your goals will come naturally. Short work-related trips may bring future benefits. Support from colleagues and friends will aid in the completion of important projects.



KIDZONE



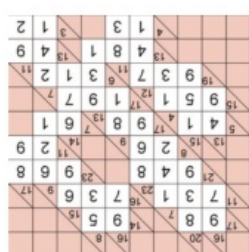
Krishnaa, Bengaluru



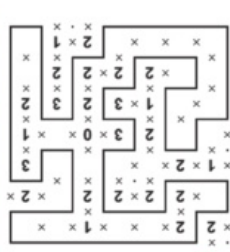
Akhilesh S, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

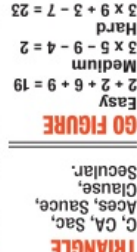
SOLUTIONS



KAKURO



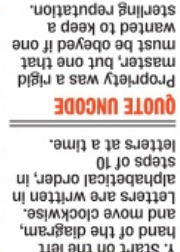
LOOP



ALPHA



SUDOKU



MENSA PUZZLE



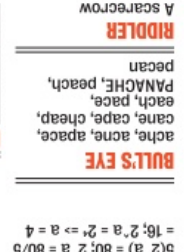
QUICK



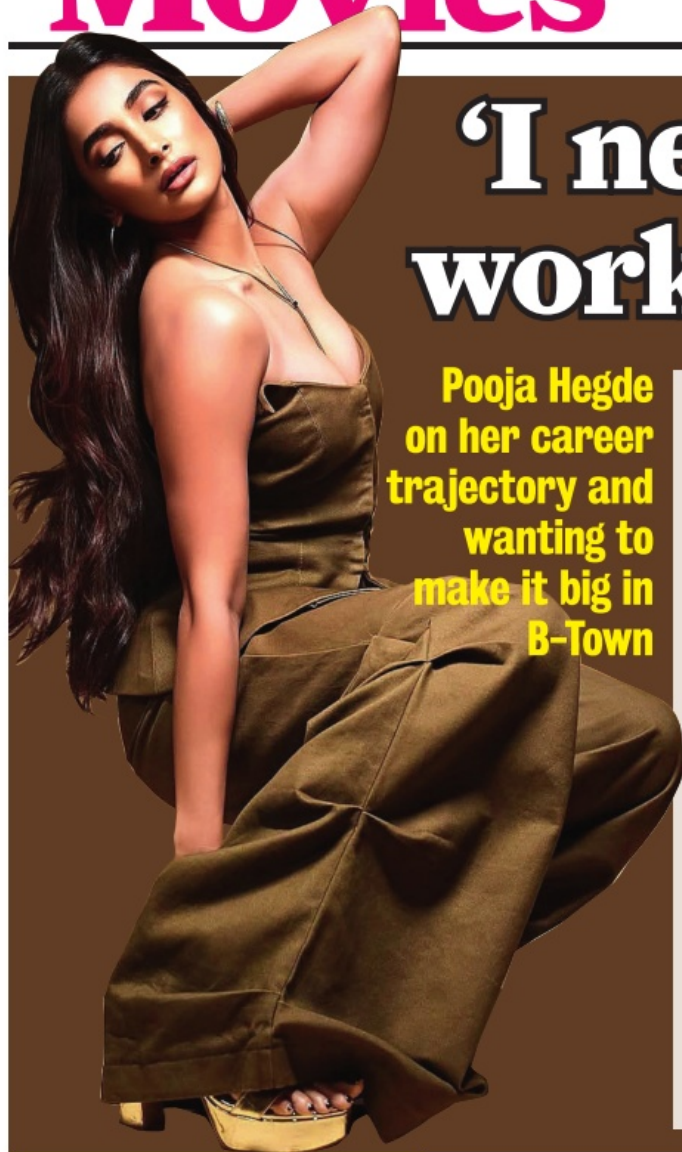
STRIKE OUT



FAST FIVE



BULL'S EYE



'I never take my work for granted'

Pooja Hegde on her career trajectory and wanting to make it big in B-Town

Pooja Hegde, who has been a part of successful movies in Telugu and Tamil cinema, started 2025 with Deva. Talking about making a breakthrough in Bollywood, the actress, who made her Hindi film debut with the Hrithik Roshan-starrer Mohenjo Daro in 2016, says, "Who doesn't want to make it big in Bollywood? Which actor has ever said 'no' to this? One definitely wants to succeed, and you never know when a film will come along and change things for you."

Pooja, who is originally from Mumbai, appreciates how welcoming South filmmakers have been towards her. She says, "When you're not from the industry, it's not just about whether the audience gives you a chance, but whether the industry does. Every film becomes crucial because I don't have someone producing films for me or reassuring me that even if one doesn't work out, they'll make the next one for me."

You get fewer opportunities. I've built my career by constantly hustling. It's been an upward journey, and every film has been vital for me. Every film can make or break you, and you need to push through if it doesn't work out to secure your next project. So, I never take my work for granted."

Pooja hopes for more opportunities in Bollywood. She reflects, "I grew up watching Bollywood films, so the decisions I make regarding Hindi movies are very emotional for me. I'm thrilled that some of my South films have crossed boundaries and reached the Hindi audience. Now, I want to do more Hindi films and strike a balance."

The actress, who will next be seen in the Tamil film Retro with Suriya, believes that it is important for actors to be open to the projects that come their way, irrespective of the language. "You never know who's watching you and sees something unique in you," she says.

—Onkar Kulkarni, ETimes



Murder mystery

The team of Agnyaathavaasi is excited about the release of the movie. The movie, bankrolled by

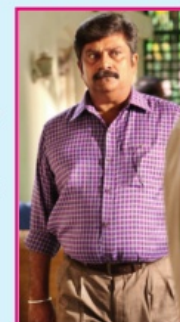
Hemantha Rao, is scheduled to arrive in theatres on April 11. Agnyaathavaasi is directed by Gultoo fame Janardhan Chikkanna.

"We unveiled the movie's teaser more than a year ago. It has received good feedback. Now, the post-production work of the movie is in its final stages. We have decided to release the movie next month. The movie's story is different and on par with other language movies. The movie, set in 1996 and 1997, is a murder mystery," said Chikkanna.

Rangayana Raghu plays the lead while Pavana Gowda and Siddu Mulimani, Sharath Lohitashwa and Ravishankar Gowda play key roles in the movie. The script is written by Krishnaraj. "I can assure the audiences that this movie will keep them hooked. It is murder mystery, but the making and the narration are quite different," the director said.

Rao was one of the producers for Kannada movie Humble Politician Nograj. Rao debuts as a full-fledged producer in Sandalwood with this movie. He has established Dakshayani Talkies in memory of his mother Dakshayani.

The team has also decided to release the movie's audio in a few days.



He knows his geo-politics

Actor John Abraham, who is gearing up for his upcoming movie 'The Diplomat', has a keen interest in geo-politics. In fact, it's his interest in geo-politics that drew him to this film.

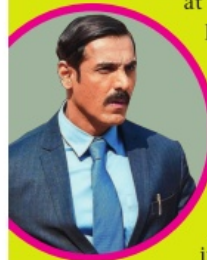
John has admitted that at times he gets geo-political anxiety similar to how people have environmental anxiety. Well, it's not particularly a good thing for someone like John, who has insane fitness levels. The actor shared

which geo-political development has caught his fancy, of late.

John told IANS, "I am following what's happening between Israel and Hamas, and also the Russia-Ukraine war, I am just cued in on that. I feel Jerusalem is at the centre of every conflict in the world today. The whole conflict between East and West Jerusalem, the wall, the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Wailing Wall or the Western Wall, the history from 1947, the Abraham Accord, the Balfour Accord and everything, that has led to what's happening across the world today."

The actor also said having geo-political knowledge makes a person more aware and helps one hone their decision making skills.

—IANS



Vidya Balan issues AI-generated video alert

Actress Vidya Balan, who was recently seen in 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3', is the latest actor from the film industry falling prey to the increasingly dangerous use of the Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The actress took to her Instagram, and shared the video in question notifying her followers about its lack of authenticity. She urged her followers to not take anything on face value in current times where it is so easy to generate video content using deep fakes.

She also penned a note in the caption asking her followers to be mindful of misleading information, and stressed upon the practice of

verifying anything. She wrote, "There are videos currently circulating on social media and WhatsApp, which appear to feature me. However, I want to clarify that the videos are AI-generated and inauthentic. I have no involvement in its creation or dissemination, nor do I endorse its content in any way. Any claims made in the videos should not be attributed to me, as it does not reflect my views or work."

"I urge everyone to verify information before sharing and be cautious of misleading AI-generated content."

—IANS



Give her a break: '21 & figuring it out'

Post criticism on her new blonde hair, actress Millie Bobby Brown has now proudly shown her make-up free face.

She recently said that she is still "figuring out" how to take care of her skin in the best possible ways, reported Page Six.

"Hey guys it's Mills here, I don't know if you can see but my break out is pretty bad right now," she said in the clip she posted without any filters, as per the outlet.

"I'm 21 years old, I'm still figuring out what my skin likes and what it doesn't," reported

Page Six. Many of her fans praised the actress for being candid. Brown's makeup-free reveal comes after people questioned her looks earlier in the week.

Millie Bobby Brown, known for playing Eleven in the science fiction series 'Stranger Things', has responded to the recent criticism that her new blonde hair has made her look significantly older than her 21 years.

Sharing a screenshot of an article with the headline, "No One Cares How Old You Think Millie Bobby Brown Looks," the 'Stranger Things' star wrote beneath, "thank you." Her reaction came after comments on social media about her appearance at the Los Angeles premiere of her new Netflix film, 'The Electric State', as per the outlet.

—ANI



Trailer unveiled



Director, producer and actor Dayal Padmanabhan is busy with the release of his latest movie Kapatil. The movie is scheduled for release on March 7. Veteran producers K Manju and Ramesh Yadav unveiled the trailer of the movie on Thursday.

"The specialty of Kapatil is its content. I am very happy to bankroll this movie. It is a psychological thriller. We are not trying to convey any message to society but highlight the menace of cybercrime," said Padmanabhan.

Padmanabhan is known for bankrolling movies Haggada Kone and Aa Karaala Raathri. "The shooting of the movie was held in Bengaluru. I have worked as a creative head and producer for this movie. I want to encourage newcomers through my D Pictures banner," he said.

The movie, directed by Ravi Kiran and Chetan SP, features Sukrutha Wagle, Sathvik Krishnan, and Dev Devaiah. The movie's music is scored by Johan Shevanesh while Sathish Rajendran worked behind the camera.